

**LISTING OF THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): A sanitary tampon as set forth in claim 8, wherein the absorbent layer is formed of a fibrous web comprising rayon, and the hydrophobic liquid-permeable layer is formed of a spunbonded nonwoven fabric comprising polyethylene terephthalate.

Claims 5-7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A sanitary tampon comprising:  
an absorber including an absorbent layer made of an absorbent fibrous material and a hydrophobic liquid-permeable layer covering both surfaces of the absorbent layer, said absorbent layer having a plurality of small open recesses dispersed in both the surfaces of said absorbent layer and extending toward an inner area of said absorbent layer, and said absorber being folded along three fold lines extending in a longitudinal direction of said absorber to have three clefts defined between adjacent folds and then compressed over ~~[[an]]~~ a substantially entire length into a column shape, wherein ~~[[with]]~~ the three clefts opening open on a column surface in a direction parallel to the longitudinal direction,

wherein the small open recesses are formed by embossing the absorbent layer prior to compression so that a fiber density of the absorbent layer is increased in a vicinity of the small open recesses.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): A sanitary tampon as set forth in claim 8, wherein the absorber is folded into a column shape to have a generally M-shaped cross-section.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A sanitary tampon as set forth in claim 8, wherein prior to compression, the small open recesses have an opening diameter of 0.5 to 1.0 mm and a depth of 1 to 5 mm and are distributed in a density of 1 to 10 recesses/cm<sup>2</sup>.